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Taking a Stand through Food Choices? Characteristics of Political Food Consumption and Consumers in Finland

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Abstract

This study looks at food as a realm of political consumption by examining buycotting and boycotting of foods for ethical, political or environmental reasons in Finland. The results of an Internet-based survey (N=1,021) showed that around half of the respondents often or occasionally both buycotted and boycotted foods. Multinomial regression models indicated that women, the highly educated, the political left, those who donated for charity, those whose food choices were motivated by domestic origin and ethical food production, and those who trusted that consumption choices, institutional actors and the media can advance ethical food production and consumption, were most likely to be active in buycotting and boycotting. Buycotters/boycotters were very active in buying local food but less eager, for instance, to buy organic or Fair Trade products or to reduce the use of meat or milk. The article concludes by critically assessing the complex relationship between buycotting/boycotting and sustainable practices and suggesting that consumers may be more willing to transform their eating patterns if other societal actors, too, make an effort to influence ethical food consumption.

Keywords (4-6)

boycotting; buycotting; food; political consumption; survey

1 Introduction

Since consumption patterns related to housing, traffic, and food are significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental problems (Nissinen et al., 2015), the debates on the role of consumption in advancing sustainability are now prominent both in everyday life, the media and various political strategies. In social and political studies since the late 1990s, practices that try to contribute to sustainable transitions have been termed as environmentally friendly, sustainable, ethical, concerned, responsible, or political, because they expand the focus from self-regarding preferences in consumption, such as price or safety, into wider societal concerns (e.g., Barnett et al., 2011; Boström et al., 2005; Micheletti, 2003; Sassatelli, 2014; Stolle and Micheletti, 2013). In her classic discussion on political consumerism, Micheletti (2003) referred to these different orientations as "private virtues" and "public virtues", thus making a conceptual difference between self-interest and altruism, but at the same time noting that in political consumption practices, these two virtues tend to be tied together.

Political consumption has been defined as consumers using the market to become politically active and as consumption that includes "social, cultural and animal-related concerns that go beyond the immediate self-interests of the individual consumer or household" (Klintman and Boström, 2006, 401). The phenomenon has been analysed from a variety of perspectives including also critical debates. First, political consumption has been interpreted as an increase of more personalized forms of political participation and citizen mobilization around economic justice, environmental protection, human rights and animal welfare (Bennett, 2012). In such discourses, political consumption is celebrated as an influential means for citizens to renew democracy and develop consciousness about the societal consequences of consumption (Willis and Schor, 2012), exert political pressure on governments and companies, make a difference at the level of everyday life, and become empowered through "individualized collective action" (Micheletti, 2003).

Second, it has been asked whether placing the responsibility for global sustainable transition on consumers is justified, or whether other measures at the level of the political system may be more legitimate and effective (e.g., Jacobsen and Dulsrud, 2007; Kjærnes, 2012). Researchers critical of the idea of political consumerism have noted that various complexities of everyday life and several competing social responsibilities and moral commitments, for instance within the family, may not be easily reconciled with making deliberate and sovereign market choices based on ethical considerations (Jacobsen and Dulsrud, 2007). It is also evident that social, cultural and

economic divisions such as those based on education and income, place of living, and interest in societal issues create unequal opportunities for people to take part in making ethical choices on the market (e.g., Carfagna et al., 2014; Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Micheletti et al., 2012).

A third perspective on political consumerism is based on the notion that in the age of individualisation and erosion of traditional communities, participation in consumption patterns aiming at a more sustainable world may be a means for people to build new social ties, collective identities and a sense of belonging in "imagined communities" (Long, 2010; Anderson, 1983). In late modern societies, this takes place particularly through consumption practices and lifestyles (Giddens, 1991; see also Bildtgård, 2008). This approach asks whether political consumerism is primarily about individuals intentionally aiming at changing the market or whether it is better conceptualised as late modern identity building. In the latter, trendiness and pleasure pursuits may equal or even overtake sustainability concerns, as exemplified in the recent rise of veganism and the popularity of vegan products not only among vegans but omnivores and flexitarians, too (Jallinoja et al., 2018).

Political consumption in everyday purchase practices takes a variety of forms: products can be boycotted (avoided) to express political sentiment, or they can be "buycotted" (favoured) to show support to the values the product represents (Micheletti and Stolle, 2006). People may buy eco-labelled, organic, fair trade or animal-friendly products, or refrain from buying products that are seen as ethically problematic. While buycotting signifies conforming to making a difference through the market, boycotting may also represent a resistance to consumerist values through abstaining from buying. However, Neilson (2010) argues that buycotting requires more deliberation and effort than boycotting, and that the former can be seen as a "rewarding strategy" whereas the latter is better described as a "protest strategy." Copeland (2014) found that buycotting is associated with norms of "engaged" and boycotting with norms of "dutiful" citizenship. Since boycotters tend to be less trusting towards national (Koos, 2012) or political institutions (Copeland, 2014), boycotting may be more charged with political meaning than buycotting. In addition, political consumption relates not only to boycotting and buycotting, but also to discursive strategies and lifestyle politics (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012). Everyday practices may be characterised by all of these four forms: for instance, vegetarians buy vegetarian or vegan products (buycott), reject meat products (boycott), engage in discourses on vegetarianism/veganism, and try to change their lifestyles (see, e.g., de Rezende, 2014).

There is a strong tradition of analysing buycotting and boycotting as a general category (e.g., the European Social Survey 2002/2003, see Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Neilson, 2010; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Sandovici and Davis, 2010), rather than of particular product types. Although there is an ample body of research on ethical and sustainable food consumption, studies on buycotting and boycotting have not focused on food in particular. We chose to focus on food, in order to gain a more detailed picture of how buycotting and boycotting of food is associated with perceptions and practices relating to sustainable food choices. Eating, as many other spheres of consumption, is for a good part a routinised everyday phenomenon and changing these routines requires effort and a supporting social and cultural environment (Warde, 2016). Food and eating related choices are made multiple times each day at homes, grocery shops, school and workplace canteens, cafes and restaurants, and buying, preparing and eating food constitutes a substantial part of people's daily rhythms and time use (Holm et al., 2016; Pääkkönen and Hanifi, 2012). What is particularly characteristic of current food related discourses and practices is that food is a highly moralized sphere of consumption and a realm of "politico-ethical problematisation" (Sassatelli and Davolio, 2010, 226). Public discourses on food are loaded on the one hand with an ethos of free choice and enjoyment, and on the other hand with public policy efforts that encourage people to govern their eating in order to adopt healthier and more sustainable food consumption patterns (Gronow, 2015; Jallinoja et al., 2016a; Sassatelli, 2004).

In the present study we chose to focus on boycotting and buycotting of food, since we wanted to explore the daily purchasing practices, i.e., the mundane everyday activities that all consumers are faced with frequently. While focusing on boycotting and buycotting, we take into account Julie Guthman's (2008) suggestion that contemporary food activism intersects with neoliberal rationalities such as consumer choice, localism, and self-improvement. We aim to explore political consumption as "emerging in the current age of globalization, Internet communication, […] individualization and enhanced consumer choice" (Stolle and Micheletti, 2013, 202). Against this background, we analyse (a) to what extent Finnish consumers engage in buycotting and/or boycotting food products for ethical, political or environmental reasons, (b) how buycotting and boycotting are linked with food-related practices that are regarded as sustainable, and (c) how socio-economic backgrounds, political orientation, eating motivations, and in particular opinions and trust in various actors' power and influence in the sustainability of food production and consumption are associated with buycotting and boycotting. By examining a large number of potentially relevant determining factors of boycotting and buycotting we are able to assess their relative importance.

In the following sections, we first describe findings of earlier empirical studies on background factors of political consumption and then present our data and results. In the discussion and conclusion, we address the social stratification of political food consumption and the roles that consumers see for various societal actors in advancing sustainability. In particular, we critically assess the complex relationship between buycotting/boycotting and various food practices regarded as sustainable, and discuss the policy implications of the results.

2 Explaining Political Consumption

In Europe, there are variations between the countries as regards levels of political consumption: it is a much more common practice in the northern and western than in the southern and eastern parts. In the European Social Survey (ESS) 2002/2003 (see Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Koos, 2012; Micheletti et al., 2012; Stolle and Micheletti, 2013), 23–33% of the respondents in the Nordic countries reported having boycotted a product and 44–55% having chosen a product for political, environmental or ethical reasons during the past year, whereas in Southern European countries the share for buycotting was 7–12% and for boycotting well below 10%. Finns, together with other Northern Europeans, Germans, and the Swiss, were among the most active political consumers in Europe: 42% of Finns reported having buycotted and 27% having boycotted (Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014). Such country differences are hypothesized to relate to the level of political participation, economic development, market structures, availability of ethical products, institutionalisation of labelling schemes, and consumers' mobilisation in alternative food movements (see, e.g., Koos, 2012; Stolle and Micheletti, 2013; Terragni and Kjærnes, 2005).

Although in surveys such as those above, questions on buycotting and boycotting have been operationalised into separate items, the differences in the social background factors explaining boycotting and buycotting have been found to be quite small (Koos, 2012; Sandovici and Davis, 2010). Consequently, in the analysis many studies have used a combined variable including both practices. Studies have shown that a number of socio-economic and other factors are associated with political consumption (operationalised as buycotting, boycotting or both). As shown below, in some cases the results have been inconsistent, probably due to factors related to varying national and cultural contexts and study settings.

Many studies have shown that *women* are more active political consumers than men (Carfagna et al., 2014; Koos, 2012; Micheletti et al., 2012; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Sandovici and Davis, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005; Tobiasen, 2005), whereas others have reported no gender effect (Berlin, 2011; Echegaray, 2015).

Furthermore, earlier results indicate almost consistently that the highly *educated* are more likely to be political consumers than others (e.g., Berlin, 2011; Carfagna et al,. 2014; Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005; Tobiasen, 2005). Moreover, people living in *urban environments* are more often political consumers (Micheletti and Stolle, 2005; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005; Zhang, 2015) compared to those living in the countryside. However, Berlin (2011) did not find the level of urbanity to have an effect on political consumption.

Studies on the role of *age* in political consumption, however, indicate more heterogeneous results. On one hand, it has been suggested that the young are not as active as older generations in political consumption (e.g., Micheletti and Stolle, 2006). On the other hand, the young (Sandovici and Davis, 2010; Zhang, 2015) and the young and the middle-aged (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Micheletti et al., 2012; Strømsnes, 2005) have been found to be more active in political consumption. Ferrer-Fons and Fraile (2014) showed that in the early 2000s, in some countries the most active group was the youngest (15–34-year-olds), but in other countries, such as Finland, the middle-aged (35–54-year-olds) were most active. Tobiasen (2005) concluded that in Denmark age differences in political consumption were diminishing, and Berlin (2011) found no age effect in Sweden.

As regards factors related to *political orientation* and *solidarity*, earlier studies have shown that those who identify themselves to the left (Berlin, 2011; Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Sandovici and Davis, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005) or to the left/green (Micheletti and Stolle, 2005) are at least somewhat more active political consumers. Neilson (2010) found that political consumers were more altruistic than non-political consumers (see also Strømsnes, 2005; Tobiasen, 2005), and Baumann et al. (2015) concluded that political consumption was associated with donating for charity. According to Micheletti and Stolle (2012), those who value “solidarity citizenship”, i.e., show concern for those who are worse off, are more likely to be active in political consumerism (see also Koos, 2012).

In the discussion of new forms of participation, political consumption has been associated with the decline of citizens' *trust in political institutions* (Sassatelli, 2014; Willis and Schor, 2012). Studies in the North and South America and Europe have suggested that low trust in institutions and politics (Echegaray, 2015; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Scruggs et al., 2011; Tobiasen, 2005; Zhang, 2015) are associated with political consumption. In Neilson's European-wide study (2010), political consumers had lower trust in institutions than non-political consumers (see also Koos, 2012), while Berlin (2011) found in his study in Sweden that low trust in "state performance" in advancing sustainability and high trust in "governmental sustainability institutions" (i.e., environmental agencies and the consumer agency) were associated with political consumption. In contrast, Strømsnes (2005) found that in Norway, political and non-political consumers did not substantially differ from each other in their trust in political institutions.

Furthermore, earlier research indicates that being active in political consumption and in other political activities are not mutually exclusive (e.g., Baumann et al., 2015; Willis and Schor, 2012). According to de Zúñiga et al. (2013), an association can be found between political efficacy (i.e., belief that one can influence the government) and political consumption. Some studies have recently also focused on the role of the internet in political consumption. Ward and de Vreese (2011) found that in the UK, socially conscious consumption among young people was associated with online participation, i.e., using the internet for participatory purposes, and de Zúñiga et al. (2013) found that social media use was associated with political consumerism in the US.

In addition to the socio-economic and political participation aspects of political consumption, in this study we are interested in the ways in which people's *eating motivations* are interlinked with their engagement in food-related political consumption. For example, there is some evidence that sustainability concerns and political consumption tend to go hand in hand with healthiness concerns (Jallinoja et al., 2016b; Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Niva et al., 2014; Tobiasen, 2005; Willis and Schor, 2012), suggesting that "self-regarding" and "other-regarding" motivations are not mutually exclusive. Because food products marketed as ethical or environmentally friendly are often more expensive than conventional foods, price might be a more important concern for non-political than to political consumers. Finally, in Finland domestic origin is one of the aspects that consumers regard as very important in food (e.g., European Commission, 2014a) and also relate to the ethics of food (Mäkiniemi et al., 2013; Uusitalo and Oksanen, 2004).

Based on a large body of earlier research it is obvious that political, ethical, ecological and responsible food consumption may include a number of practices such as buying organic food, local food or Fair Trade products, buying directly from farmers, avoiding food waste, reducing the use of animal protein, or adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet, to name a few (see, e.g., Beagan et al., 2010; Halkier 2018; Johnston et al., 2011; Lea & Worsley, 2008; Tobler et al., 2011). However, people may engage in such practices for many reasons or they may not think of the practices as deliberately political, ethical or ecological (Niva et al., 2014; Soper, 2008). In the study of political food consumption it is thus important also to study the ways in which buycotting and boycotting are associated with such practices.

Our case, Finland, is a country characterized by relatively high trust in the safety, quality and freshness of food and in various actors in the food system, such as national and European food safety agencies, food manufacturers and shops (European Commission, 2010). Based on survey results, the most important food choice criteria for Finnish consumers include quality, taste and freshness, price, and healthiness (Lennernäs et al., 1997) as well as domestic origin (Peltoniemi & Yrjölä, 2012). Finns are more worried about farm animal welfare than about various safety-related concerns such as pesticide residues or food poisonings (European Commission, 2010). In recent years sustainability aspects have gained ground in Finnish public discussion and also food markets: between 2011 and 2015/2016, the sales of organic foods grew by 67% (Pro Luomu, 2017) and that of fair trade products by 69% (Fair Trade Finland, 2016). Despite the rapid increase, the market share of organic foods remains at 2% of total retail sales (Pro Luomu, 2017).

3 Materials and Methods

3.1 Data Collection

The study is part of a project entitled ‘Efficiency of the food market and transparency of food pricing in Finland’. The data collection was commissioned to a Finnish marketing research company Taloustutkimus Oy which could provide an Internet-based survey with a panel based on a stratified sample of the Finnish population[1]. Since 86% of the Finnish population uses the internet (Statistics Finland, 2014), utilizing an Internet panel probably does not cause substantial bias in the representativeness of the results.

The invitations were sent out in November 2014 to a stratified sample of 5,341 potential respondents representing the population in terms of age, gender, province, and education (using a correction parameter based on estimated response rate for each variable).[2] Two reminders followed during two weeks after the initial invitation. The total number of invitations received by the potential respondents was 4,986.[3] Out of them, 1,021 completed the survey, yielding a final completion rate of 20.5%. In the context of Internet surveys, this can be regarded as satisfactory (see, e.g., Dillman et al., 2009).

For gender and place of residence (for saving space, province is not shown in Table 1), the sample is well representative of the population. However, there is some bias towards the middle-aged and the elderly and those with high education (Table 1).

Table 1 Comparison of sample demographics (N=1,021) with the Finnish population in 2014

	Sample (%)	Population
Gender*		
women	47.1	50.3
men	52.9	49.7
Age group*		
18–34	19.1	28.3
35–49	20.7	24.7
50–64	31.6	27.2
65–79	28.6	19.8
Education level**		
basic	17.8	25.7
intermediate	55.0	53.1
high	27.1	21.2

*The population statistics for gender and age include the 18–79-year-old-population on December 31, 2014, based on Statistics Statistics Finland's PX-Web databases (http://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/fi/StatFin/).
** The population statistics on education include the whole population above 20 years of age on December 31, 2014.

3.2 Variables in the Analysis

The dependent variable in the analysis, i.e., engaging in buycotting and/or boycotting, was operationalized in a way that enables some comparison with the results of earlier studies, but also presents a more detailed picture of buycotting and boycotting than the question used in, e.g., the European Social Survey 2002/2003[4] (e.g., Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Koos, 2012; Stolle et al., 2013). The respondents were asked how often they had bought and avoided certain foods for political, ethical or environmental reasons, with response options often, occasionally, seldom, never, and don't know. We chose to use these descriptive response options instead of quantitative ones (such as "once in a week", etc.), since there are probably weekly and monthly variations in

people's food choices, which make it difficult for them to evaluate the frequency in very accurate terms. We wanted to leave it to the respondents to define what they consider as often, occasional, etc. instead of the defining the categories ourselves. Based on these questions, the respondents were grouped into four groups: (1) often/occasionally engaging in both boycotting and buycotting (the "both" group), (2) often/occasionally engaging in buycotting but not boycotting, (3) often/occasionally engaging in boycotting but not buycotting (the two "either" groups), and (4) seldom/never engaging in boycotting and buycotting (the "neither" group). For the multinomial regression analysis, the two rather small "either" groups were combined.

The independent variables in the multinomial regression analysis included three types of variables: (a) socio-economic variables; (b) solidarity measured as donating for charity, political orientation, views on political participation and possibilities to influence sustainable development; and (c) eating motivations. The motivation questions were based on the Food Choice Questionnaire scale developed by Steptoe et al. (1995), and complemented by variables focusing particularly on the ethical and healthiness aspects of food. The variables are described in detail in Table 2.

Table 2 Variables in the multinomial regression analysis

Variable name	Variable description (question and response options)	Categories in the analysis
Buycotting and boycotting foods		
Buycotting	How often have you bought certain foods for political, ethical or environmental reasons? (1 = often, 2 = occasionally, 3 = seldom, 4 = never, 5 = I don't know)	0) Seldom/never engaging in buycotting (3, 4 and 5) 1) Often/occasionally engaging in buycotting (1 and 2)
Boycotting	How often have you avoided certain foods for political, ethical or environmental reasons? (1 = often, 2 = occasionally, 3 = seldom, 4 = never, 5 = I don't know)	0) Seldom/never engaging in boycotting (3, 4 and 5) 1) Often/occasionally engaging in boycotting (1 and 2)
Sociodemographic and political variables		
Gender	Gender	0) Man 1) Woman
Age	When were you born? (birthyear)	0) 18–34-year olds 1) 35–49-year olds 2) 50–64-year olds 3) above 65 years of age
Education	What is your highest completed education? (1 = comprehensive school, 2 = vocational school, 3 = upper secondary school, 4 = training centre, 5 = university of applied sciences, 6 = university)	0) Basic 1) Intermediate (2, 3 or 4) 2) High (5 or 6)
Living area	What is your living area? (1= Helsinki, 2 = Espoo/Kauniainen/Vantaa, 3 = other city with > 100 000 inhabitants, 4 = smaller city with < 100 000 inhabitants, 5 = other city, 6 = other municipality)	0) Capital district (1 or 2) 1) Other city with > 100 000 inhabitants (3) 2) Smaller city with < 100 000 inhabitants (4) 3) Other municipality (5 or 6)
Donating for charity	Do you donate money for charity? (1= at least monthly, 2 = several times a year, 3 = a few times a year, 4 = once a year or more seldom, 5 = never)	0) never/rarely (4 or 5) 1) at least a few times a year (1, 2 or 3)
Political orientation	On a scale from 1 to 7, how far to the left or to the right do you think you are politically? (scale from 1 = left to 7 = right)	0) right (6 and 7) 1) centre (3, 4 and 5) 2) left (1 and 2)
Citizens' influence	To what extent do you believe in the effectiveness of various means available to citizens in advancing environmental friendliness and animal welfare in food production and consumption? (Likert scale (I trust the effectiveness…) from 1 = not at all to 5 = very much)	
Influencing by voting and through political parties	(a) Voting in the elections and influencing through political parties	0) trust very little (values ≤3) 1) trust a lot (values >3)
Influencing by participatory activities	A recoded mean variable of (b) signing citizens' initiatives, (c) influencing in state and local hearings, electronic citizen forums and public meetings, (d) being active in NGOs (Cronbach alfa .777)	0) trust very little (values ≤3) 1) trust a lot (values >3)
Influencing by social media	A recoded mean variable of (e) own communication in the social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, blogs), (f) taking part in campaigns in the social media (Cronbach alfa .722)	0) trust very little (values ≤3) 1) trust a lot (values >3)
Influencing by contacting companies	(g) contacting companies	0) trust very little (values ≤3) 1) trust a lot (values >3)
Influencing by consumption choices	(h) influencing through own consumption choices	0) trust very little (values ≤3) 1) trust a lot (values >3)
Power of actors	To what extent do you think that various actors have power and influence in advancing environmental friendliness and animal welfare in food production and consumption? (Likert scale (I think the actor has power and influence …) from 1= not at all to 5 = very much)	
Power of institutional actors	A mean variable of (a) political decision-makers, (b) authorities (Cronbach alfa .748)	0) very little power (values ≤3) 1) a lot of power (values >3)
Power of market actors	A mean variable of (c) agricultural producers, (d) food industry, (e) wholesale or retail trade (Cronbach alfa .646)	0) very little power (values ≤3) 1) a lot of power (values >3)
Power of the media	(f) The media	0) very little power (values ≤3) 1) a lot of power (values >3)

Table 2 continues

Eating motivations	It is very importany to me that the food I eat is … (Likert scale from 1= not at all important to 5 = very important)	
Ethics	A recoded mean variable of (a) fair Trade, (b) produced locally, (c) organic, (d) produced in an environmentally friendly way, (e) produced without genetic modification, (f) the conditions for the farm animals are good (Cronbach alfa .810)	0) not that important (values ≤3) 1) important (values >3)
Healthiness as restricting	A recoded mean variable of (g) low-fat, (h) low-calorie, (i) low-sugar, (j) low in hard fat, (k) helps to keep weight down (Cronbach alfa .835)	0) not that important (values ≤3) 1) important (values >3)
Healthiness as favouring	A recoded mean variable of (l) keeps me alert, (m) keeps me healthy, (n) contains lot of vitamins and minerals, (o) contains lot of protein, (p) is high in fibre (Cronbach alfa .773)	0) not that important (values ≤3) 1) important (values >3)
Origin	A recoded mean variable of (q) made of domestic ingredients, (r) made in Finland (Cronbach alfa .851)	0) not that important (values ≤3) 1) important (values >3)
Price	(s) inexpensive	0) not that important (values ≤3) 1) important (values >3)

In the descriptive analysis below, we also included variables that focused on *purchase practices and other environmental food activities and views* (see Table 4). The respondents were asked to take a stand on the statements with Likert scale response options from 1 = "totally agree" to 5 = "totally disagree." Moreover, they were asked whether they followed a vegetarian or vegan diet. In the analysis these diets were combined as the proportion of vegans was less than one percent. The purpose of Table 4 is to give an overall picture of the co-presence of boycotting/buycotting and the more detailed food purchase practices and views. This descriptive analysis including relatively simple frequency comparisons between the groups is illustrative of the not so straightforward relationship between the respondents' identification as buycotters and/or boycotters and in engaging in actual practices that are often seen as sustainable.

3.3 Analysis

The analysis below was conducted with IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. In the descriptive analysis, we look into how the groups variously engaged in buycotting and/or boycotting differ from each other in terms of their practices related to environmental, ethical and animal welfare issues. Because carrying out both buycotting and boycotting instead of engaging in only one of them indicates a stronger commitment to political food consumption, in the multinomial regression analysis we compare the "both" and the "either" groups with the "neither" group. We first look at the unadjusted effect of each independent variable. In Model 1, only the socio-economic variables are included. In Model 2, these were analysed together with political opinions and trust variables, and in Model 3, together with eating motivations.

4 Results

In the following, we present the descriptive results on the prevalence of political food consumption (Table 3), the reported carrying out of practices and opinions related to ethics, environmental and animal welfare issues (Table 4), and the results of the multinomial regression analysis (Table 5).

4.1 Prevalence of Political Food Consumption

Table 3 shows a coherence in the pattern of political food consumption: the respondents tended to either buycott and boycott (39.5% did both at least occasionally), or not buycott and not boycott (46.9%) foods for ethical, political or environmental reasons. However, when only those who buycotted or boycotted *often* were observed, it was found that 14.0% had often buycotted and 14.5% had often boycotted, and only 9.4% had often done both (not reported in Table 3). In total, 19.8% reported never having buycotted, 19.1% never having boycotted, and 16.0% never having done either (not reported in Table 3).

Table 3 Percentage of respondents engaging in buycotting and boycotting food products for ethical, political or environmental reasons (N=1,021)

		Boycotting: "How often have you avoided a particular food for ethical, political or environmental reasons?" (%)		
		often/ occasionally (n=477)	seldom/ never/DK (n=544)	Total (N=1,021)
Buycotting: "How often have you selected a particular food for ethical, political or environmental reasons?" (%)	often/occasionally (n=468)	39.5	6.4	45.8
	seldom/ never/DK (n=553)	7.2	46.9	54.2
	Total (N=1,021)	46.7	53.3	100.0

4.2 Sustainable Practices and Opinions about Environmental and Farm Animal-Related Policies

The differences between the four groups were generally in the direction that could be expected: those who both buycotted and boycotted (the "both" group) reported to be more active in

sustainable purchase and other food activities than the other groups, and those who either buycotted or boycotted (the two "either" groups) were more active than those who did neither (the "neither" group) (Table 4). The only exception concerned avoiding food waste, the handling of which seemed remarkably similar in all groups.

However, even among those who both buycotted and boycotted there were large differences between the various practices and views: as for *purchase practices*, the majority of them agreed to buying local food and sustainable fish and to avoiding foods from countries they did not want to support or from manufacturers they did not trust, but they were less active in the other purchase practices, such as buying Fair Trade or organic foods or buying directly from farmers. Concerning *other environmental food activities and views*, a majority of the "both" group agreed to following media discussion on animal welfare and environmental issues, and disagreed to not thinking about which foods to favour for environmental reasons. But they were considerably less eager to cutting down on meat or milk use or contacting a company for information of the origin of products, and the proportion of vegetarians or vegans was low even in the "both" group. The same pattern of varying levels of participation in the practices can be observed in the two groups that either buycotted or boycotted: they reported to be quite active in the same practices as the "both" group, but less eager to engage in others.

It should be noted that in some practices and views, also the "neither" group was in fact quite active. For instance, almost half of them agreed to buying local food, favouring sustainable fish, avoiding foods from suspicious countries or manufacturers, and following media discussion on animal welfare or environmental issues related to food. Interestingly, a smaller share of respondents in the "neither" group compared to the other groups considered it to be difficult to make ethical food choices.

Table 4 Percentage of respondents agreeing with statements on environmental, ethical and animal welfare aspects of food production and consumption among the groups of 1) both buycotting and boycotting, 2) buycotting not boycotting, 3) boycotting not buycotting and 4) neither buycotting nor boycotting (% totally or somewhat agreeing, N=1,021)

	% of those both buycotting and boycotting (n=403) agreeing	% of those buycotting and not boycotting (n=65) agreeing	% of those boycotting and not buycotting (n=74) agreeing	% of those neither buycotting nor boycotting (n=479) agreeing	% of all respondents (N=1,021) agreeing	P-value (Exact Sig, 2-sided)
Purchase practices						
I often buy Fair Trade products.	46.2	29.2	25.7	12.7	27.9	.000
I often buy organic foods.	45.9	38.5	25.7	14.4	29.2	.000
I often buy local foods.	75.2	67.7	70.3	45.1	60.2	.000
I favour sustainably caught fish.	77.2	70.8	63.5	47.2	61.7	.000
I often buy foods directly from producers, e.g., a food circle or a farm.	21.8	13.8	14.9	7.9	14.3	.000
I avoid buying food produced in a country the politics or conduct of which I don't want to support.	90.3	66.2	77.0	44.1	66.1	.000
I avoid buying products by manufacturers I don't trust to act responsibly.	90.3	78.5	78.4	46.3	68.1	.000
Other environmental food activities and views						
I often throw food away.	15.1	20.0	17.6	19.0	17.4	.459
I have cut down using meat or milk products because of environmental or ethical reasons.	26.1	7.7	10.8	3.8	13.3	.000
I have contacted a food manufacturer or a retailer to ask about the origin of their products or to give feedback about it.	17.4	13.8	17.6	6.7	12.1	.000
I follow the discussion in the media on farm animal welfare or the environmental impacts of food.	77.9	66.2	51.4	39.2	57.1	.000
I haven't thought much about what kind of food should be favoured to reduce environmental impacts.	25.1	33.8	48.6	62.2	44.8	.000
It is difficult to make ethical food choices.	63.0	63.1	56.8	52.2	57.5	.010
Following a vegan or other vegetarian diet.	6.2	1.5	0.0	1.3	3.1	.000

4.3 Multinomial Regression Analysis Results

In the multinomial regression analysis, most unadjusted effects for both comparisons ("both" vs. "neither" and "either" vs. "neither") were statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level (Table 5). However, the unadjusted effects of age group, living area and valuing low price proved to be largely insignificant. The Nagelkerke R square for model 1 remained relatively low (.073). For models 2 and 3 it can be considered reasonable (.312 and .234, respectively).

In model 1 for the “both vs. neither” comparison, women and those with intermediate or higher education were more likely to engage in both buycotting and boycotting than men and those with basic education. In the “either vs. neither” comparison those with intermediate or high education were more likely than those with basic education and the 35–49-year-olds were less likely than the youngest group to participate in either buycotting or boycotting.

Model 2 did not remarkably change the results in Model 1 regarding the sociodemographic variables. For the “both vs. neither” comparison, women, those with intermediate or high education, donating for charity, with left political orientation, trusting in the influence of participatory activities and consumption choices as well as believing in the power of institutional actors and the media were more likely than others to participate in both buycotting and boycotting. For the “either vs. neither” comparison, the youngest age group (although the difference to the oldest group was not significant), those with intermediate education, and those trusting in the influence of consumption choices were more likely than others to participate in either buycotting or boycotting; and those with centre political orientation were less likely than others to do so (Table 5). In addition, although Model 2 indicated differences between the groups, Table 5 (column “N”) also shows that the majority of all respondents believed in the power of institutional and market actors as well as the media, and trusted that they can influence through consumption choices. In contrast, less than half of all respondents believed that they can influence through voting and political parties, and an even smaller share trusted that they can influence through participatory activities, social media or by contacting companies.

In model 3 for the “both vs. neither” comparison, the elderly and those with the lowest education were less likely than others to engage in both buycotting and boycotting, and those living in the capital area (although the difference to the countryside, i.e., “other municipality” was not significant), valuing domestic origin and ethical aspects of foods were more likely than others to do so. In model 3 for the “either vs. neither” comparison, the two middle-aged groups, those with the lowest education, those living outside capital region (although only the “other city” differed significantly), and those with a ”centre” political orientation were less likely than others to engage in either buycotting or boycotting, whereas those regarding healthiness as “favouring” as important and those valuing the ethical aspects of foods were more likely than others to do so (Table 5).

Table 5 Results of multinomial regression analysis for political food consumption (odds ratios and statistical significance, N=1,021)[1]

			Unadjusted effects, odds ratio		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		N	Both vs. neither	Either vs. neither	Both vs. neither	Either vs. neither	Both vs. neither	Either vs. neither	Both vs. neither	Either vs. neither
Gender	man	540	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	woman	481	1.841***	1.139	1.758***	1.090	1.466**	1.176	1.184	0.762
Age	18–34	195	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	35–49	211	0.998	0.485*	1.148	0.503*	1.001	0.430*	0.947	0.429*
	50–64	323	1.100	0.706	1.261	0.734	0.775	0.535*	0.922	0.541*
	65+	292	0.747	0.851	0.901	0.906	0.658	0.756	0.619*	0.635
Education	basic	182	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	intermediate	562	1.700**	1.896*	1.617*	1.986*	1.610*	2.071*	1.698*	2.106*
	high	277	2.901***	1.928*	2.688***	1.895*	2.431***	1.757[A]	3.369***	2.334*
Living area	capital district	221	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	other city > 100 000 inh.	193	0.778	0.585	0.767	0.577[A]	0.745	0.597	0.591*	0.479*
	smaller city	415	0.720[A]	0.713	0.746	0.732	0.689 [A]	0.693	0.631*	0.679
	other municipality	192	0.705	0.592	0.747	0.654	0.793	0.644	0.699	0.653
Donating for charity	never/rarely/DK	550	1	1			1	1		
	min. a few times a year	471	2.736***	1.252			2.246***	1.018		
Political orientation	right	351	1	1			1	1		
	centre	327	0.896	0.472**			1.042	0.533*		
	left	343	2.209***	0.782			1.881**	0.739		
Influencing by voting and through political parties	no/little/DK	551	1	1			1	1		
	quite/very much	470	2.519***	1.537*			1.067	0.935		
Influencing by participatory activities	no/little/DK	739	1	1			1	1		
	quite/very much	282	4.546***	1.789*			2.136***	1.204		
Influencing by social media	no/little/DK	851	1	1			1	1		
	quite /very much	170	3.239***	1.367			1.135	0.824		
Influencing by contacting companies	no/little/DK	700	1	1			1	1		
	quite /very much	321	2.674***	1.472[A]			1.369 [A]	1.086		
Influencing by consumption choices	no/little/DK	333	1	1			1	1		
	quite /very much	688	4.967***	2.950***			2.714***	2.690***		
Power of institutional actors	no/little/DK	347	1	1			1	1		
	quite /very much	674	3.330***	1.995**			1.641**	1.534[A]		
Power of the media	no/little/DK	278	1	1			1	1		
	quite /very much	743	3.341***	1.805**			1.503*	1.192		
Power of market actors	no/little/DK	144	1	1			1	1		
	quite/very much	877	3.972***	2.265**			1.462	1.441		
Healthiness as "restricting"	no/little/DK	388	1	1					1	1
	quite/very much	633	1.238	1.641*					0.797	1.129
Healthiness as "favouring"	no/little/DK	202	1	1					1	1
	quite/very much	819	2.382***	2.894***					1.487[A]	1.894*
Low price	no/little/DK	184	1	1					1	1
	quite/very much	837	0.738	0.820					0.738	0.827
Domestic origin	no/little/DK	224	1	1					1	1
	quite/very much	797	3.521***	2.120**					2.051**	1.379
Ethics of production	no/little/DK	458	1	1					1	1
	quite/very much	563	5.152***	3.249***					4.491***	3.006***
Nagelkerke R square						.073		.312		.234

[1]*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, [A]p<.10

5 Discussion

Our results indicated that one in seven respondents reported that they often both buycotted and boycotted food products for ethical, political or environmental reasons, suggesting that the share of Finns *strongly* committed to such activities is quite small. However, four out of ten respondents reported at least occasionally both buycotting and boycotting. The respondents in this "both" group

can thus be characterized as being at least somewhat active as buycotters and boycotters. Little less than half of the respondents neither buycotted or boycotted, forming a non-active group of consumers who did not identify themselves with buycotting or boycotting activities. The semi-active group who either buycotted or boycotted was much smaller than the two other groups (approximately one in seven respondents).

Few earlier studies of buycotting and boycotting in Finland exist but the European Social Survey (ESS) 2002/2003 (e.g., Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Koos, 2012; Micheletti et al., 2012) can be used as an indicative baseline for comparing our results with. However, some qualifications should be noted: whereas our questions focused on the frequency of buycotting and boycotting of food products, the ESS offered only "yes" and "no" response options to the questions on buycotting/boycotting products (in general, not food products in particular) during the past year. The ESS found that 47% of Finns had either buycotted or boycotted products during the previous year (Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014), and in our study 40% of the respondents had at least occasionally buycotted and boycotted food products. Although these numbers are not directly comparable, they suggest a roughly similar share of the population to be at least sometimes making food choices based on ethical, political or environmental reasons. However, it can also be argued that even if the ESS results suggest that political consumption is a relatively widely shared practice in the Nordic countries compared to most other European countries, our results point to quite a modest share of consumers often buycotting and boycotting.

5.1 How Widely Are Various Sustainable Food Consumption Practices Shared among the Active, Somewhat Active and Non-Active Groups?

One practice, not throwing food away, proved to be widely shared among all groups. Buying local food and sustainable fish and avoiding food from untrustworthy sources were not as widespread as avoiding food waste, but still a substantial share of all groups, including the non-active group, reported carrying out such sustainable activities. It might seem as a contradiction that some consumers reported not making choices based on ethical, political or environmental reasons, but at the same time agreed to buying sustainable fish, for example. However, people carry out sustainable activities not only for "political, ethical or environmental" but many other reasons as well, and they may not always consciously "label" such activities in terms of ethics, the environment or politics. People's food choices are based on multiple considerations, and the political, ethical and environmental ones mix with other considerations. For instance, Schoolman (2017) has noted that

buying local food is not always associated with environmental concerns and that people buying local food do not "fit the mold of the typical ethical consumer" (ibid., 1). People may buy local food because of freshness and tastiness, for instance, and the avoidance of products from manufacturers which are not trusted to act responsibly may be based on considerations of safety and healthiness rather than ethics or the environment. Such ambiguities are an interesting result as such, and merit a more detailed investigation in future analyses.

In many sustainable practices, those who both buycotted and boycotted reported to be more active than other respondents. This was the case particularly in favouring local food and sustainable fish, avoiding foods from untrustworthy countries or manufacturers, following media discussion on animal welfare and environmental issues, and thinking about how to make environmentally friendly food choices. It is also noteworthy that particularly the "both" group and those who buycotted considered making ethical food choices to be difficult. An explanation for this may be that the challenges of reconciling ethical and other food related expectations and the practical possibilities of doing so become a lived experience only when one starts engaging in ethical activities. Interestingly though, these difficulties do not seem to prevent political food consumers from trying to make such choices, although they apparently wish that it would be easier.

Buying directly from farmers, cutting down on meat or milk use, following vegetarian or vegan diet and contacting a company for information of the origin of their products proved to be the least favoured practices among all consumer groups. Indeed, these are more demanding than the more popular practices: they require practical effort, use of time, or changing the accustomed food habits. Earlier research has shown that particularly the reduction of meat consumption is considered challenging, and not many people in the Nordic countries, including Finland, are willing to eat less meat (Niva et al., 2014; see also Jallinoja et al., 2016b). Meat enjoys a valued position in the Western food cultures both in everyday and festive occasions, and changing the accustomed ways of cooking, eating, and socializing around food, and breaking the established norms of what is considered "proper food", is demanding (Jallinoja et al., 2016b; Macdiarmid et al., 2016). Buying directly from farmers is increasingly popular (Ehrnström-Fuentes and Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2016), but it remains a marginal practice compared to easily accessible supermarkets and hypermarkets. In addition, since most food products contain origin labels, most people probably do not consider it necessary to contact the manufacturers for more details on the products. The general trustfulness of Finns towards food and food manufacturers (European Commission, 2010) probably further reduces their felt need to receive more detailed origin information.

5.2 Who Are the Buycotting and Boycotting Consumers?

The adjusted models in the multinomial regression analysis indicated that being active in *both* buycotting and boycotting was most likely for women (except in Model 3; suggesting that women and men would not differ in both buycotting and boycotting if their eating motivations were similar), those with intermediate or higher education; with leftist political orientation; who donated for charity; trusted in the influence by citizens through participatory activities and consumption choices; believed that institutional actors and the media have power in advancing sustainability; and those whose eating was motivated by domestic origin and the ethics of food production. In addition, in Model 3 the oldest age group was less likely to be active than the other age groups, suggesting that there may be differences in the eating motivations between the age groups. Those living in the capital district seemed somewhat more likely than others to be active, but the difference to those living in the countryside was not statistically significant. This indicates that active buycotting and boycotting of food is on one hand a practice most prevalent in the most urbanised areas, but also suggesting that people living in the countryside may have better possibilities to, e.g., buy directly from farmers.

The factors associated with being engaged in *either* buycotting or boycotting (compared to doing neither) shared some similar features to those above but there were also some differences showing that many explanatory variables are more strongly linked to being active in both buycotting and boycotting than in engaging in only one of them. Here, the youngest group and those with high or intermediate education seemed most likely to be active, but there were no gender differences, and the political left and right did not differ from each other. The capital district seems most likely to be active in either buycotting or boycotting, but the statistical difference is significant only to other large cities. Healthiness as "favouring" and the ethics of production were associated, but domestic origin was not associated with participating in either buycotting or boycotting.

These results are similar to many earlier studies as regards gender (e.g., Koos, 2012; Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Tobiasen, 2005), education (e.g., Berlin, 2011; Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014; Micheletti et al., 2012; Neilson, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005), living area (e.g., Sandovici and Davis, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005), political orientation (e.g., Micheletti and Stolle, 2012; Sandovici and Davis, 2010; Strømsnes, 2005), and donating (Strømsnes, 2005; Tobiasen, 2005), and corroborate

earlier findings by suggesting that ethical concerns (Scruggs et al., 2011) play a role in political consumption.

According to Ferrer-Fons and Fraile (2014), class differences in political consumption are largest in countries with the highest GDP per capita, particularly so in Finland and Switzerland. Others have characterised ethical consumers as people with cultural capital who "enact a set of ecologically oriented high-status tastes that are central to their identity projects and strategies for claiming status and distinction" (Carfagna et al., 2014, p. 160). Baumann et al. (2015) have argued that political consumption may act as a "boundary marker" for those with sufficient cultural and economic capital. Also our results showed that the highly educated were most engaged in political food consumption, suggesting that an exclusive element may be involved in political food consumption. The highly educated may also be better informed and/or more concerned about environmental issues than others (European Commission, 2014; Kouvo, 2003). If political consumption is an interest mainly to the upper or middle class, it may eventually contribute to strengthening existing social hierarchies and excluding those for whom ethical consumption is not possible because of lacking economic or cultural resources.

Compared to earlier research, our results bring a more nuanced picture of some issues. First, earlier studies have found that health concerns (Niva et al., 2014; Willis and Schor, 2012) are associated with sustainable or socially conscious consumption. Our results introduce a new perspective by suggesting that boycotting and boycotting are specifically associated with "favouring" healthy foods, but not with "restricting" unhealthy foods. This suggests that political food consumption may be a type of practice implying a more general focus on "positive eating", i.e., favouring foods that are considered as good, beneficial or virtuous from both health ("self-regarding") and ethical ("other-regarding") perspectives. Others, too, have recognized that certain forms of sustainable food consumption, such as plant-based eating, may be connected to healthism, especially among the middle class, for whom eating organic salad mix has been "in some sense performative of an elite sensibility" (Guthman, 2003, 53; Jallinoja et al., 2018). However, since the "favouring" seemed more prevalent in the "either" than the "both" group compared to the neither group, this aspect needs to be studied further in future analyses.

Second, we found that valuing domestic origin was associated with being engaged in both buycotting and boycotting. In Finland, food was after the second world war strongly a question of agricultural politics that focused on supporting the subsistence of small family farms (Kokko and

Räsänen, 1997), and even in the present day, food is in the media typically framed not only in terms of health and lifestyles but also as a question of the livelihood of the countryside and the promotion of national and local food cultures (see also Boström and Klintman, 2009). In this frame, the favouring of domestic food is related to both supporting the national economy and local farmers, and to the idea that especially Finnish food is pure and ecological (cf. Bech-Larsen et al., 2016 on the image of the New Nordic Cuisine). Our data, however, does not allow disentangling the roles that various nationalistic, economic, ecological or other motivations play in the valuation of domestic food.

Third, the results suggest that being active in political consumption and other political activities are not mutually exclusive. This result is supported by earlier research (e.g., Baumann et al., 2015; Willis and Schor, 2012). Those respondents who thought that people can influence through various means available for them as both citizens and consumers were more likely to engage in both buycotting and boycotting. Such activities included consumption choices and what we termed "participatory activities": citizens' initiatives; hearings, electronic citizen forums and public meetings; and NGOs. In contrast, trusting in citizens' influence on food production and consumption through political parties and voting did not differentiate between political and non-political consumers, nor did the belief in the power of social media (cf. Ward and de Vreese, 2011; de Zúñiga et al., 2014). The results indicated that the majority of all respondents believed in the power of institutional and market actors as well as the media. A majority also trusted that they can influence through consumption choices, while a smaller share believed in influencing through voting and political parties, or by participatory activities, social media or contacting companies. These results suggest that Finns do see a role for themselves particularly as consumers – more so than as citizens – in advancing sustainability, while they also think that other actors have a role to play, too.

5.3 Limitations

Some limitations of our study are to be noted. First, the response rate of our web-based questionnaire was quite low (probably partly explained by the ease of ignoring e-mail invitations), and it might be that those who had low interest in food did not respond. The fact that a great majority of Finns have access to Internet at home (Statistics Finland, 2014) supports the data collection method, although the middle-aged and the elderly and those with high education were somewhat over-represented. Second, we have looked at consumer groups defined by only two

questions on buycotting and boycotting. These questions have the benefit of functioning in categorising consumers into relatively clearly defined groups and enabling comparison with earlier studies. It is however obvious that the possibilities for comparison with another kinds of operationalisations of political food consumption (see, e.g., Halkier & Holm, 2008) or with studies focusing on political food consumption from a lifestyle perspective are limited (Stolle & Micheletti, 2013, 42).

In order to gain a more nuanced picture of political food consumption practices across different consumer groups both quantitative and qualitative research is needed. The social, cultural and economic conditions for transition into more sustainable food consumption should be explored, including the study of various food practices (e.g., eating animal- and plant-based foods, generation of food waste) and how they take shape in interaction with other practices of everyday life and sociotechnical changes in society. Finally, research is needed on consumers' trust in experts and institutional arrangements in the realm of sustainability as well as on how this trust is associated with food practices and attitudes.

6 Conclusion

Our results have shown significant social divisions and inequalities, particularly as regards education, in terms of how people in a Nordic welfare state are engaged in sustainable consumption practices (cf. Ferrer-Fons and Fraile, 2014). Our results also indicate that some of the practices that political food consumers endorse are shared by many of those who only seldom or never buycott or boycott foods for ethical, political or environmental reasons, suggesting that people do not necessarily conceptualise their everyday practices as "ethical, political or environmental". It is also possible that some environmental and ethical practices many have become routinized and habitualized into lifestyles to the extent that many people have stopped actively categorizing them as "political". It can thus be argued that political food consumption as buycotting and/or boycotting represents too narrow a perspective on what can be termed as "socially conscious consumption" (Atkinson, 2012).

Alternatively, it may be that the participation in such practices is motivated rather by health or taste than by ethical or environmental considerations, or it may be a combination of various self-regarding and other-regarding factors which are difficult to separate in everyday life. Others have noted that consumers may be driven by both altruistic and self-interested concerns at the same time

and get pleasure from committing to more socially and environmentally sustainable consumption (Gabriel & Lang, 2015) or to 'alternative hedonism', referring to a 'moral form of self-pleasuring' (Soper, 2008, 571). From this perspective, new sustainable routines may well establish even without consumers reflectively developing them, provided that they are easily accessible and possible to integrate into eating patterns without laborious changes in everyday practices. Making such routines easy and ensuring that sustainable and affordable alternatives can enter and remain on the market requires active participation from market actors and public authorities alike as well as a shared agenda for sustainable food in which all actors can participate on equal terms. On a political level, it is important to pay attention to the credibility of the policies so that consumers can feel that not only themselves but also other actors in society, including both companies and public policy actors, make an effort to advance sustainable transitions.

To conclude, the results lend support to the idea that the transition towards more "sustainable culinary cultures" (Mäkelä and Niva, 2016) may proceed through several routes. The transition may include conscious and reflexive choices with articulated sustainable agendas involving deliberate buycotting or boycotting efforts, but also a gradual adoption of sustainable habits due to cultural changes in social norms and social settings. Especially the latter process may be enhanced, for instance, by regulative measures and taxation focusing on food production and consumption. Media representations of food and sustainable lifestyles have an impact on both processes, and are crucial in portrayals of sustainable culinary culture as either dull, tasteless and unattractive, or rather interesting, delicious and versatile.

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[1] All panel members are recruited offline, i.e., they have been personally invited to the panel by phone, letter, or face-to face. The panel structure is based on a nationwide random sampling of the Finnish 15–79-year-old population. The panel is used for opinion polls and marketing research purposes. On average a panelist participated a survey 0.5 times per month in 2014. At the time of the data collection, there were no direct rewards but a modest prize draw among the participants.

[2] Instead of quota sampling, the agency responsible for the data collection (Taloustutkimus Oy) used stratified sampling due to shorter data collection time and in order to avoid burdening the panel members by sending them invitations which they eventually cannot answer because their quota may be already full.

[3] The difference between the number of sent invitations (5,341) and received invitations (4,986) was caused by 1) out-of-date contact information of some panel members and 2) automatic 'out of office' notices.

[4] The European Social Survey 2002/2003 asked the following questions: "During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following? (a) deliberately bought certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons, and (b) boycotted certain products, with response options yes/no. Koos (2012) notes that the limitation of this formulation is that the frequency of 'deliberately buying' or 'boycotting' is not is not asked about. In this study, we specifically asked about the frequency, and targeted the questions on food products instead of products as a general category.